

## **Appendix 1: Transitioning Youth CASA Advocate-Mentor Program**

This section provides an overview of the Transitioning Youth CASA Advocate-Mentor Program.

### **A. Mission and Purpose of the Program**

1. The purpose of the Transitioning Youth CASA Advocate-Mentor Program is to develop specialized volunteers who will assist youth successfully bridge from the juvenile justice system to adulthood. TY Advocate-Mentors are specially trained. They provide advocacy and support for youth from the age of 16 up to the age of 21. The program provides a specialized Transitioning Youth CASA Advocate-Mentor for the youth. The Advocate-Mentor will provide guidance, mentoring and advocacy to youth who do not have an identified life-long home or connection.
2. The priority population for this program is identified as youth involved with Juvenile Court Services due to delinquent acts. Juvenile Court Services has deemed that the youth will not be returning to a parental home. These youth may not be eligible for other transition programming. CINA-involved youth can also be accepted into the program, but the cases accepted are limited to youth who are not returning to a parental home, youth who have do not have a plan post-foster care or youth who have little to no informal or relative support.

### **B. TY CASA Program Manager duties**

1. A Specialized Program Manager will be maintained for the Transitioning Youth CASA Program. Program Manager duties shall include but not be limited to the following:
  - a. Recruitment of new Advocate/Mentors
  - b. Screening and interviewing applicants
  - c. Helping new applicants enroll in pre-service training
  - d. Facilitating New Advocate Orientation and Fostering Futures training
  - e. Scheduling 'Swearing in' Ceremonies with advocates and judges.
  - f. Managing cases to include matching Advocate/Mentors with youth, filing appropriate documentation with the court, assisting advocates with monthly reporting and court reports, receiving monthly updates from advocates, assisting advocates with case concerns.
  - g. Providing in-service training opportunities specific to the TY Advocate/Mentor role.
  - h. Providing retention and recognition services for advocates.

### **C. Transitioning Youth Advocate-Mentor Requirements**

1. The Transitioning Youth Program Manager is responsible for recruiting volunteers to serve in the Advocate-Mentor role. Advocate-Mentors can be recruited from trained CASA Advocates or from the general public.
2. Transitioning Youth CASA Advocate-Mentors must complete the regular process for volunteering in the CASA program including participating in an interview, successfully passing a background check, participating in 30 hours of pre-service training and being sworn in by a Judge. Additionally, the Advocate-Mentor must complete a Transitioning Youth orientation session, along with Fostering Futures training.
3. As Advocate-Mentors are trained and prepare to accept a case, he/she will write their biography to include information about themselves such as their outside interests, preferences for a match with a youth (i.e. male or female, etc) and availability.
4. TY CASA Advocate-Mentors are often those who have both the time and energy to commit to a regular meeting schedule and can follow through with their commitments. Good advocates are flexible, have healthy boundaries and are both patient and self-aware. They also tend to have great communication skills and are enthusiastic about being a positive role model in the life of a young person.

5. TY CASA Advocate-Mentors participate in an initial meeting with each youth set up by the JCS or DHS worker. The TY CASA program encourages JCS or DHS staff to attend the initial meeting. The initial meeting is an opportunity for the advocate and youth to get to know each other and a time to work through match logistics. This meeting will be documented by staff. Matches will discuss best times and ways to reach each other, best times for meetings, and the best way to communicate plans with families, if appropriate. Matches can also discuss how to introduce each other in public, if they would like to be introduced as a CASA Advocate, coach or a friend.
6. Following the match, TY Advocate-Mentors will make contact with their assigned youth every week and see the youth in person at minimum of one time per month. "Contact" is considered a phone call, text message or other types of correspondence, such as sending a card or letter.
7. Advocate-Mentors will adhere to the confidentiality policies and procedures as outlined in the CASA Program Policies and Procedures manual.
8. Advocate-Mentors will report to the TY Program Manager twice in their first month following assignment. Following that, the Program Manager and Advocates will make contact at least once per month.
9. Advocate-Mentors will report their hours and mileage donated to the CASA program each month.
10. Advocate-Mentors must meet a requirement of 12 additional training hours per year.
11. Unless the Court remains involved with a child to the age of 21, The CASA program will provide training and support for Advocate-Mentor until the Youth reaches the age of 19. At that point, it is our hope that a lifelong relationship of trust has been established. While the CASA office will not be a formal part of the relationship with youth beyond the age of 19, staff are available to mentors as a resource.
12. Advocate-Mentor special duties and responsibilities.

**The CASA Advocate-Mentor demonstrates the following behaviors:**

- |                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Positive role model   | • CASA Advocate       |
| • Adult companion       | • Opener of doors     |
| • Instructor or teacher | • Developer of talent |
| • Limit setter          | • Tutor               |
| • Boundary definer      | • Self-esteem builder |
| • Listener              | • Coach               |
| • Resource              |                       |

**An Advocate-Mentor is not:**

- |                                 |                                       |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • Parent substitute             | • Moralist                            |
| • Babysitter                    | • Probation officer                   |
| • Part of Youth's family        | • Chauffer                            |
| • Consultant for Youth's family | • Professional counselor or therapist |
| • Social worker                 | • Recreational director               |
| • Judge                         | • A source of money                   |

#### **D. Case management of Transitioning Youth CASA Advocate-Mentor cases**

1. The Iowa CASA Program will administer the Transitioning Youth CASA Advocate-Mentor program. The Iowa CASA Program will provide staff to oversee programming as Program Manager.
2. The Transitioning Youth program provides trained Advocate-Mentors for youth ages 16 and above.
3. The Transitioning Youth CASA Program accepts case referrals in the following ways:
  - a. Referral from Juvenile Court Services
  - b. Referral from Department of Human Services
  - c. Direct appointment from the Court

a & b) When a potential case referral is received from DHS or JCS, the Program Manager will:

  - i. talk with the DHS or JCS worker to ensure the referral is appropriate for the program.
  - ii. provide a copy of biographies of available Advocate-Mentors to the DHS or JCS worker and consult with the SWCM or JCO to determine the appropriate match.
  - iii. contact the Advocate-Mentor to ensure their availability for the case.
  - iv. set up the child's case in ICO.
  - v. If possible, the Program Manager will ensure that the Youth and Advocate-Mentor have met and are compatible prior to making an official assignment. If so, the Program Manager will file as a proposed order, Order Appointing Specialized Transitioning Youth CASA (resource # App 1) with the juvenile court.
  - vi. Upload the file stamped Order Appointing Specialized TY CASA into ICO.

c) When an order is received directly from the court appointing a Specialized TY CASA to a case, the Program Manager may not have knowledge that the court was considering the program for the Youth. In this situation, the Program Manager will contact the child's worker (either JCS or DHS) to begin the process as laid out above in steps i thru vi. The Program Manager will make every attempt to match the youth to an Advocate-Mentor to serve the child and his/her needs and personality. If the child refuses to participate, the Program Manager will file a Revocation of Order Appointing a Specialized Transitioning Youth CASA Advocate-Mentor (Resource # App 2) as a proposed document on EDMS.
4. If the program receives an order from the court or referral from DHS or JCS, but doesn't have any available Advocate-Mentors, the Program Manager will place the child's name on a waiting list. The list will be weighted according to need, how soon the child will turn 18, the severity of the youth's need for a life-long connection, etc. As Advocate-Mentors become available, the Program Manager will consider all the Youth on the list and talk with JCS or DHS about their recommendations for each available Advocate-Mentor.
5. The Advocate-Mentor is required to report monthly to the Transitioning Youth Program Manager regarding the number/type of contact with the youth, current assessment of youth needs/goals, and miles and hours spent volunteering with the youth. The monthly update template will be provided by the Transitioning Youth Program Manager. (Resource # 44a or 44b)
6. TY Advocate may be excused from their duties for any of the following reasons:
  - a. Long term illness of self or family member.
  - b. If the youth decides they do not wish to be part of the Transitioning Youth CASA Program.
  - c. If the advocate or youth moves out of state and is no longer able to maintain meaningful contact due to logistics.

- d. If a boundary established by mutual agreement of the advocate and the youth has been crossed, thereby subjecting the advocate or youth to either physical or mental personal distress.
7. The process of matching the Advocate and the Youth is as follows:  
The Program Manager receives a referral from JCS or DHS regarding a youth, or an order for CASA is received from the judge. Once the referral/order is received, the Transitioning Youth Program Manager will submit a biography from the Advocate-Mentor to the appropriate DHS/JCO worker assigned to the youth/case. Once the JCO/DHS worker approves an Advocate-Mentor, the JCO or DHS worker will arrange a time and location for the Advocate-Mentor to have their first meeting with the youth. After the first meeting, if the youth agrees to be matched with the Advocate-Mentor, a proposed order appointing the Specialized Transitioning Youth CASA Advocate/Mentor will be filed with the court by the Program Manager.
8. Advocate/Mentor Report to the Court  
Reports to the court are to be completed **with the youth** and submitted to the Transitioning Youth Program Manager 7 days prior to the scheduled hearing. The completed report must also be sent to the appropriate JCO/DHS worker by the Program Manager. The reports should be in narrative format addressing the issues/questions provided on the template regarding the six life domains. The report will be signed electronically and dated by both the youth and the Advocate-Mentor. (Resource # App 3)
9. Transportation of Youth  
TY Advocate/Mentors may need to provide transportation to a youth as part of their assignment. TY Advocate/Mentors cannot be forced to transport a youth, but do have the choice to transport if they wish. Prior to transporting the youth or any friends/family of the youth, the Advocate/Mentor must be in compliance with the Iowa CASA Program Transportation policy as listed below. (Resource # 37)

### **Transportation Policy**

Transportation by an Advocate/Mentor in personal vehicles of Youth or other persons during the course of performing their duties and responsibilities is not mandatory. Advocate/Mentors can still perform their duties without transporting a youth; however, in certain circumstances an Advocate/Mentor may choose to provide transportation for a TY CASA youth or his/her family members if it is case-related. The need for transportation will be assessed by the Advocate/Mentor and Transitioning Youth Program Manager when developing the Advocate's initial action plan for the case.

When transporting TY CASA youth, it is extremely important to consider their safety as well as the Advocate/Mentor's own safety. If a TY Advocate/Mentor chooses to transport TY CASA youth or their family members, the following guidelines shall be met:

- a. Only Advocate/Mentors with valid driver's licenses, auto insurance coverage of 20/40/15 and who have passed a Department of Motor Vehicles (driving record) check are allowed to transport the youth and/or their family members.
  - i. It is the responsibility of the Advocate/Mentor to annually provide copies of a valid driver's license and proof of auto insurance coverage to the program staff.
  - ii. It is the responsibility of the Advocate/Mentor to notify program staff if his/her driver's license is revoked or suspended at any time.
  - iii. It is the responsibility of the Advocate/Mentor to notify program staff if his/her auto insurance coverage lapses at any time.
- b. Advocate/Mentors must have a Transportation Consent on file for each case in which transportation will be provided that includes:
  - i. Written permission of the Program Manager,

- ii. Written permission of the youth's legal guardian or custodial agency.
  - iii. Written permission by the youth if age 18 or over
- c. Advocate/Mentors who have received three (3) or more traffic citations (moving or non-moving) in a year or who have been involved in three (3) or more vehicular accidents in the last twelve (12) months are prohibited from transporting TY CASA youth or family members. It is the responsibility of the TY Advocate/Mentor to inform staff of any accident they are involved in immediately following the incident.
  - d. Advocate/Mentors who have been drinking any alcoholic beverages, using illegal substances or taking any medication that may impair their ability to drive shall not transport any youth.
  - e. Advocate/Mentors who have been convicted of DWI or DUI (Driving while intoxicated or Driving under the influence) within the last four (4) years shall not be permitted to transport a Transitioning Youth or family member/friend. It is the responsibility of the Advocate/Mentor to inform staff of any DWI/DUI arrest that occurs after initial background checks.
  - f. Advocate/Mentors transporting a Transitioning Youth shall abide by all traffic laws.
  - g. Advocate/Mentors are responsible for the passengers in their vehicle. It is the Advocate/Mentor's responsibility to safely transport the Transitioning Youth. Advocate/Mentors are required to comply with state laws regarding safety and seatbelt requirements.

If circumstances permit or the above guidelines are not followed, the TY CASA Program Manager has discretion to revoke a Advocate/Mentor's privilege to transport a youth and/or their family members at any time.

#### 10. Dismissal of a TY CASA Advocate-Mentor

TY CASA Program follows the policy for Dismissal as outlined in the CASA Program Policies and Procedures manual.